

Report to Ward 6 Steering Committee on All Wards Meeting, April 17, 2018,
Miller Center

11 Steering Committee members attended, all NPAs represented. Four CEDO staff.

1. The major item on the agenda was a report from CEDO Director Noelle MacKay on the planning process for Memorial Auditorium. CEDO has launched a website on Memorial, <https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/CEDO/Memorial-Auditorium>. It gives the current process on renewing the facility and how the public can get involved as well as reports on the physical condition as these are ready and later concept studies and plans. It also includes a document library. The public engagement process will be available at <https://www.facebook.com/CEDOBurlington/> and <https://twitter.com/CEDOBTV>.

MacKay reported that the Mayor wants this as a public space, that rehab costs are unclear and range from 5 to 15 million depending on program decisions. The process will address only the building, not the alleyway or the adjacent buildings. It will look at management as well as the physical building. In the past, management has lost \$250,000 a year in operations. It wasn't clear if the BT switching equipment in the basement now pays rent to the City but any renovation would require its removal so it's not a tenant-in-place. The process will lead to a public vote in November on broad outlines for the facility.

NPA SC comments included an assessment that "the process between the City and the NPAs is still broken. Why not establish an advisory committee that involves the NPAs and the public?" MacKay responded that there will be a public process discussion. The NPA SC member responded, "Put an NPA representative on a committee, don't treat the NPAs as something to present to and then check off." MacKay then said, "You want a partnership; I understand."

A second NPA SC person wanted the mayor to explicitly identify with the Memorial project, "to take ownership."

The first NPA SC person added, "We are legally the body that represents the residents of our ward, who are all members of their respective NPAs. We know our communities."

MacKay responded that some in the public are reluctant to attend public meetings, especially if they have businesses, because they fear some sort of retaliation. The tone of many meetings is too harsh. The one convened on the Cherry and Bank street renewal plans went very well, by contrast, and a lot of good ideas was shared. Asked if the tone of public discussion influenced her decision to seek new employment, she said "yes".

I said I would share with CEDO the results of the questionnaire filled in by those attending the Future of Memorial Summit at Contois last fall. I mentioned that the All NPA group had investigated funding sources and would CEDO be contacting groups such as Art for America, and MacKay said yes.

2. Phet presented the budget and said that requests for reimbursement for expenses need to be submitted on the vender request form. Some NPAs may have funds left over and should decide what to do prior to the end of the fiscal year. Phet suggested setting up a scholarship, but to check back with our NPAs. NPA 6 has \$302.07 in available funds out of \$400 allocated. The All NPA then voted on a resolution asking the Mayor to allocated \$2000 per ward for the NPAs in the next fiscal year to facilitate public engagement, including acquiring/using information technology. The motion was approved unanimously.
3. Cindy Cook of Ward One NPA is establishing a group to look at the conversion of single family homes into apartments for UVM students. She welcomes participation from those in other wards. She's reachable at ccook@adamantaccord.com. I mentioned Ward 6's similar issues, including being faced with the Neighborhood Project.
4. Next All Wards Meeting: June 19th.

I brought up Matt's suggestion of a resolution in support of the new school board and the initiatives expressed by the superintendent but time and more pressing interest in other aspects of school board issues, including renewal projects at three schools, pushed this off the agenda. Though we didn't discuss those other school-related items either. As the saying goes, Thrown against the wall, it didn't stick.

Cheers, Charles